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ARAB-ISRAEL SITUATION REPORT, 2400, JUNE 8, 1967

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1. USS LIBERTY - Further reports on American casualties following the attack by Israeli boats and planes indicate that 10 Americans were killed and 75 wounded (15 seriously). The ship, armed with only four .50-caliber machine guns, fired back at the attackers. She carries one doctor and two hospital corpsmen and has a small sick bay with a few beds and operating facilities.

2. CAIRO REACTION TO LIBERTY INCIDENT - Cairo radio claimed earlier today (1730Z) that the presence of an American ship "only 15 miles north of Sinai" was clear proof that the US is taking part in the battle on Israel's side.

3. UK RELAXES ARMS EMBARGO - UK Foreign Secretary Brown told Commons earlier today that in view of the lack of a positive response from the USSR on the question of embargoing arms to Israel and the Arabs, the British Government was removing the suspension of arms shipments imposed on June 6.*

4. DENMARK ON PEACEKEEPING - Danish Premier Jens Otto Krag tonight announced his country's willingness to contribute troops for any effort to set up a new UN peacekeeping force in the Middle East (Reuters).

5. SYRIA ACCEPTS CEASE-FIRE - Several hours after Damascus radio had proclaimed that "the war is just beginning", it announced (0120Z, June 9) that the Syrian Council of Ministers had accepted a cease-fire, contingent on Israel's observance of the truce. The radio said that the SYG had been notified of this decision.

6. ALGERIA WITHDRAWS MILITARY TRAINEES - The Algerian Defense Ministry today announced the withdrawal of all its trainees in Eastern Europe. It was not immediately clear whether the decision reflected displeasure at the Soviet attitude in the Middle East crisis.

*Embassy London comments that, while the British are shipping tank spare parts and ammunition to Israel, they are not disposed to send more Centurions. Continuing the suspension would have affected hardware deliveries to Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and Libya.

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7. ALGERIAN BREAK WITH US - A senior Algerian Foreign Office official today told Ambassador Jernegan that the rupture of Algerian-US relations affects only political matters and that other relations could continue. He added that Jernegan could take his time in leaving and that he hoped the break would not last too long.

8. IRAQ ORDERS DIPLOMATS OUT - At 2330 Baghdad time, the Iraqi Foreign Ministry notified US Charge' Duncan that he had only 48 hours in which to leave the country, along with the Consul at Baghdad. The remainder of the Embassy staff was given seven days to leave; cultural and information officials were allotted ten days.

9. CANADIAN DMZ PROPOSAL - Prime Minister Pearson Thursday called for a demilitarized zone, policed by the UN, between Israel and the Arab States. His plan envisages a zone established "on both sides of the border", with UN observer groups stationed there to "prevent infiltration, terroristic acts and provocation on both sides". Other points in his program included: (1) "Certain military withdrawals after a cease-fire;" (2) No interference with passage through the Straits of Tiran; (3) Free Israeli navigation of the Suez Canal; and (4) Effective efforts to resettle the Palestine refugees.

10. JERUSALEM - Amid Israeli press and radio jubilation over its capture, there are indications that Jerusalem Municipality (New City) is assuming responsibility for services to the Old City. One Israeli editor attributed to Moshe Dayan a proposal for the formation of a confederate state comprising Israel, Arab Palestine and Trans-Jordan.

11. SHIPPING - Embassy Tel Aviv reports that two Israeli freighters in Eilat are believed preparing to pass the Tiran Straits.

12. EBAN STATEMENT - Abba Eban said tonight in New York that Mideast peace terms must be hammered out "in direct negotiations between Israel and the Arab States". He declined to discuss Israel's terms for a final settlement, but he said that the great powers could contribute to such a solution by "encouraging the idea that there should be a discussion between the countries concerned". He would not assess the impact that Israel's attitude would have on the major powers.

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13. MILITARY SITUATION

- (a) Sinai Front - Israeli spokesmen described three armored battles in Sinai June 8 as the "fiercest of the war". The Israeli intelligence chief, General Yariy, said the campaign had begun with a powerful Israeli thrust in the northern area, while Israeli forces in the center initially held fast, and the forces in the south feinted at a concentration of UAR armor near Eilat. UAR forces counter-attacked in the north at al-Arish, but this failed miserably after severe fighting. While this was in progress, the Egyptian forces in the south should have moved north to hit the flank of the Israeli offensive. Israel's air superiority prevented them from doing this, however. The battle then evolved into a general Israeli advance in all sectors, overtaking UAR forces trying to make for the Canal.
- (b) Jordan Front - Israel claims officially to be in complete control and that the Allenby and Jish Daniya Bridges across the River Jordan were destroyed. Israeli sources state that the toughest infantry actions of the entire war took place near Jenin.

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Update as of midnight on events during the six-day (6/5-6/10/1967) war between Israel and the combined forces of Egypt, Syria, Jordan, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait. Issues include: reports of American casualties following the Israeli attack on the USS LIBERTY; Egyptian reaction to the LIBERTY incident; British relaxation of its arms embargo against Israel; Danish willingness to contribute troops to a UN peacekeeping force in the Middle East; Syrian acceptance of a cease-fire; Algerian break with the U.S.; Iraqi order for all U.S. diplomats to leave their country; update on a Canadian proposal for a Middle East Demilitarized Zone (DMZ); preparations by two Israeli freighters to pass through the Tiran Straits; status of conditions on the Sinai and Jordanian fronts. Department Of State, 8 June 1967. U.S. Declassified Documents Online, link.gale.com/apps/doc/CK2349603212/GDCS?u=webdemo&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=ed35d49e&pg=1. Accessed 17 Apr. 2022.